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After demolition work, what follows?

Efforts to attract tenants to ex-Beech-Nut site slow

By Brian Nearing Published 7:32 pm, Tuesday, January 13, 2015

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A view of the former Beech Nut plant on Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2015, in Canajoharie, N.Y. Demolition work has begun at the plant. (Paul Buckowski / Times Union)

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The long-delayed demolition of the former Beech-Nut factory in Canajoharie got under way late last month after the building's owner dealt with a series of permitting issues.

Demolition crews during the week of Christmas began taking down Building 74, the newest section of the 851,000-square-foot complex, said village Code Enforcement Officer **Clifton Dorrough** on Tuesday. Building owner **Todd Clifford**, of Cincinnati-based **TD Development** LLC, which

bought the building from Beech-Nut's owners, had initially planned demolition work to start about a year ago.

There are still no prospective tenants for any part of the building or 20-acre property near the state Thruway, said Dorrough. "So far, we have nothing for there," he said.

Clifford said it was "too early to say" what might be done with the 24-acre property. "We will be taking the whole building down," he said, before cutting the interview short claiming a weak cell phone connection at an airport.

Dorrough said Clifford hired an Oklahoma-based company, B & B Recycling, of Broken Arrow, to begin taking down Building 74, a steel-and-tin structure that was used for storage when the factor was running. Initially, potential plans announced by Clifford included using some of the former factory as a warehouse and distribution facility.

More Information

In December 2013, the village granted Clifford a permit to demolish up to 220,000 square feet of the 115-year-old complex, and in 2014, granted the developer another demolition permit for up to

440,000 square feet, said Dorrough. The facility is half the size of Crossgates Mall.

The latest demolition permit expires in mid-February, which would require Clifford to apply for and receive a new permit before work could continue.

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"There have been many changes in plans," said Dorrough, and demolition plans encountered issues with insufficient air quality testing and asbestos removal planning, delaying the start of work in 2014.

B & B crews are currently cutting up steel support beams from Building 74 to be sold for scrap, he said.

"Things are still up in the air. We were going to shut him down last week. There was an outdoor insulation pile that was just getting bigger and bigger. We did not want the wind to start blowing things around and maybe affect the Thruway," said Dorrough. "We want to see the building come down, but it has to be in a safe and clean manner. This in the middle of the village."

An attempt to reach Canajoharie Mayor **Francis Avery** for comment was not successful.

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